

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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241 For four centuries the agricultural development of Brazil has been  
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249 characterized by a series of speculative phases, each focused on a single  
175 product, each centered upon a single region of Brazil. The first com-  
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121 mercial product was sugar, the first region was the Recôncavo of Bahia.  
The agricultural society founded on the shore of the Baía de Todos os  
Santos in the mid-sixteenth century has persisted with an almost unbroken  
continuity for over four hundred years. It is with the geography of this  
agricultural society that the present study is concerned.

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433 After sugar had ceased to bring a quick profit, the Brazilian  
center of effort shifted to other areas where economies of cotton, oranges,  
rice, cacao, and many lesser products opened the land and drew the am-  
bitious and the desperate from the older settlements. Intermeshed with  
these phases of agricultural development were booms in the exploitative  
industries--in the mining of gold and diamonds and in the gathering of  
rubber. So characteristic have been these speculative convulsions,  
each followed by a shift to a new region, that they might almost seem  
to be the whole of Brazilian history and Brazilian reality--the nation  
might have been practicing a system of shifting cultivation on an  
immense scale with not only fields but whole regions abandoned as the  
yield declined. Yet this is not the case, for in each of these regions  
men remain and crops persist. The Recôncavo, long past its triumph,  
has a present day population of one million people, many of whom are  
still cultivating the original speculative crop, sugar cane. The

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178 Recôncavo is not unique in this respect, for coastal Pernambuco, eastern

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 3]

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567 the offspring of master and slave and sometimes were considered as  
[563] members of the household.

A set of feudalistic inter-relations developed in the society, loosely defining the responsibilities and privileges of master and slave. Ideally the slave had the privilege, almost the right, to appeal to the master in person for assistance and advice. Manumission and the granting of the right to purchase freedom were common. At the [466] same time, the economic system was based upon involuntary labor. The slave was exploited, and the fruit of his toil went to maintain the luxurious existence of the small upper class.

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565 The small freemen occupied a very inferior social and economic position in this society. In the cities they became tradesmen or [463] craftsmen, occupations without status. In the country some were petty [554] dependents of the engenho, others established themselves as small cultivators. Since the sugar cane plantations dominated the central Recôncavo, it seems reasonable to assume that the small holders were segregated mainly in the outer zone.

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161 In 1819--during the florescence of the Recôncavo--the population  
162 of the comarca (district) of Bahia was 362,503. Most of this population was centered in the Recôncavo--200,000 in the lowlands north of the Bay--the sugar cane area--and 77,503 in the western uplands around Cachoeira--the tobacco area.<sup>31</sup> At this time the total population of Bahia was estimated at 592,908 and that of Brazil as between 1754,000,000 to 4,500,000.<sup>32</sup> Salvador, with a population somewhere [633] between 100,000 and 130,000, was the largest city in Brazil and remained so until 1830.<sup>33</sup> The class and ethnic composition of the [175] population of this period is not clearly indicated. By some estimates, [563] over half of the population of Bahia was slave and over three-fifths [561]

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472 of the twentieth century there were four cigarette factories and twelve  
cigar factories in the Recôncavo.<sup>47</sup>

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656 As was characteristic for other products in Brazil, a semi-  
autonomous government organization was set up to stabilize the tobacco  
industry in Bahia--the Instituto Bahiano do Fumo (Bahian Institute of  
Tobacco). Founded in 1935, the Instituto attempts to stimulate the  
production and improvement of techniques and quality, supervise market-  
ing through a grading system, set minimum prices, and control export of  
leaf tobacco. Although the Instituto has not succeeded in changing  
significantly the techniques of the tobacco industry, it has been  
reasonably successful in maintaining production and price.

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245 Just as Bahia had been displaced from its leading position  
within Brazil, so in turn was the Recôncavo displaced from its exalted  
position within the state. Tobacco replaced sugar as Bahia's leading  
commercial product in the nineteenth century, but forfeited its position  
to cacao in the twentieth century. The replacement of sugar by tobacco  
was primarily a shift within the Recôncavo, but the rise of cacao  
brought to the fore Bahia's southern coast. In one sense, however,  
the Recôncavo retained its old centrality--Salvador remains today the  
leading political and economic focus of the state, even for the cacao  
trade.

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249 The continued importance of the Recôncavo in Bahia has been  
partially the result of the vested interests of the sugar and tobacco  
systems. In addition, the Recôncavo remains today the leading center  
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162 of population in Bahia, despite its relative decline. In 1872 the  
Recôncavo had at least 450,000 out of a total state population of  
1,379,616. Thereafter the position of the Recôncavo declined, so  
that by 1940 only one-fourth of the almost four million people of the  
state lived in this region. However, the compact population

- 161 distribution and the vested political and economic interests of the  
162 Recôncavo allowed it to continue as the dominant region of the state.

172 The Recôncavo has remained a conservative area in Brazil, and  
178 within the state it seems to exert a strong traditional influence. On  
433 a national scale, however, the traditional values which are preserved  
249 in Bahian culture have been overridden by the aggressive dynamism of  
565 São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Moreover, the economic core of tradition  
181 in the Recôncavo--the sugar-producing upper class--is being progressively  
infiltrated and dominated by the new economic interests of the Central-  
South. The effects of these new economic interests are manifest in  
the administrative and labor problems of the sugar industry in the  
present decade.<sup>b8</sup> New economic groups also are coming to the fore in  
the tobacco industry.

The technological revolution in the sugar industry and the  
emergence of a new "progressive" upper class have weakened but not  
destroyed the traditional orientation of the Recôncavo. The cultural  
patterns which have so successfully resisted basic change for almost  
four centuries will not easily give way. However, the issues have  
been joined, and already the old technology, the old upper class, and  
the old inter-class social fabric have been profoundly disturbed.  
In the long run it seems inevitable that the cultural patterns of the  
Recôncavo will have to accommodate many new values.

177 Not all the new social forces are restricted to the upper  
178 class. More and more new technology, such as the automobile, new  
565 political and social institutions, such as labor unions, and new ideas  
181 from the South, brought through newspapers, radios, and travelers,  
have affected the lives of the lower classes. While the access of  
this group to new ideas is more limited than that of the upper class,

#### CHAPTER IV

#### POPULATION

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• [161] Introduction. In 1950 there were about one million people living in the 12,500 square kilometers of the Recôncavo—0.15 per cent of Brazil's area and about 2 per cent of its total population.<sup>1</sup> A more meaningful comparison is one with the effectively occupied coastal belt extending from Maranhão to Rio Grande do Sul, including the interior state of Minas Gerais.<sup>2</sup> The Recôncavo occupies 0.4 per cent of the area of these states and has a little over 2 per cent of the people.

[361] The relatively modest size of this population does not reflect adequately the great historical importance of the Recôncavo. The compact distribution and cohesion of this settlement make it a significant concentration of the people of modern Brazil.

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162 The Recôncavo is the foremost nucleus of settlement in the state of Bahia in both the historical and purely demographic sense. With its one million people, it had in 1950 almost 86 people per square kilometer. There were 3,800,000 people in the rest of the state, but there was no concentration which had a size and density equal to that of the Recôncavo. The only other areas with even approximately equal density—Santo Antônio de Jesus and Nazaré—were contiguous with the Recôncavo. The chief city of the Recôncavo, Salvador, was fourteen  
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162 times the size of any other urban center in Bahia, and of the five next most populous cities—with a population range of 20,000 to 30,000—two were in the Recôncavo.<sup>3</sup>

128 The discussion which follows is divided into two parts. First the general character of the population will be analyzed in terms of general cultural development, race, class, family, and economic

TABLE VI

TOTAL, URBAN, AND RURAL POPULATION OF THE MUNICÍPIOS OF THE RECONCAVO IN 1950

| <u>Município</u>     | <u>Total Population</u> | <u>Urban Population</u><br><u>(Urban Centers with</u><br><u>Manufacturing)</u> | <u>Rural Population</u><br><u>(Total minus</u><br><u>Urban Population)</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alagoinhas           | 52,007                  | 21,283                                                                         | 30,724                                                                     |
| Cachoeira            | 26,979                  | 10,825                                                                         | 16,154                                                                     |
| Catu                 | 16,437                  |                                                                                | 16,437                                                                     |
| Conceição da Feira   | 10,532                  |                                                                                | 10,532                                                                     |
| Conceição do Almeida | 25,407                  |                                                                                | 25,407                                                                     |
| Coração de Maria     | 20,256                  |                                                                                | 20,256                                                                     |
| Cruz das Almas       | 32,276                  | 6,758                                                                          | 25,518                                                                     |
| Feira de Santana     | 107,205                 | 26,559                                                                         | 80,646                                                                     |
| Irará                | 46,711                  |                                                                                | 46,711                                                                     |
| Itaparica            | 21,433                  |                                                                                | 21,433                                                                     |
| Karagocipe           | 36,868                  | 9,744                                                                          | 27,124                                                                     |
| Muritiba             | 31,605                  | 7,452                                                                          | 24,153                                                                     |
| Pojuca               | 6,911                   |                                                                                | 6,911                                                                      |
| Salvador             | 417,235                 | 389,422                                                                        | 27,813                                                                     |
| Santo Amaro          | 85,739                  | 12,258                                                                         | 73,481                                                                     |
| Santo Estêvão        | 31,665                  |                                                                                | 31,665                                                                     |
| São Félix            | 14,801                  | 5,872                                                                          | 8,929                                                                      |
| São Filipe           | 25,343                  |                                                                                | 25,343                                                                     |
| São Francisco        | 11,077                  |                                                                                | 11,077                                                                     |
| São Gonçalo          | 30,830                  | 3,771                                                                          | 27,059                                                                     |
| São Sebastião        | 21,135                  |                                                                                | 21,135                                                                     |
| Reconcavo            | 1,072,452               | 1,093,944                                                                      | 578,508                                                                    |

Source: Anuário Estatística do Brasil-1953, Ano. XIV.

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TABLE VIII

AGRICULTURAL LABOR FORCE OF THE MUNICÍPIOS OF THE RECONCÁVO IN 1940 AND 1950

| Município            | 1940 Agricultural<br>Labor Force | Per cent of<br>Change 1940-1950* | 1950 Agricultural<br>Labor Force—Estimated |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Alagoinhas           | 8,922                            | 25                               | 11,152                                     |
| Cachoeira            | 4,367                            | - 3                              | 4,236                                      |
| Catu                 | 5,395                            | - 5                              | 5,125                                      |
| Conceição da Feira   | 3,132                            | 7                                | 3,351                                      |
| Conceição do Almeida | 10,066                           | - 7                              | 9,361                                      |
| Coração de Maria     | 8,205                            | 3                                | 8,451                                      |
| Cruz das Almas       | 8,763                            | 6                                | 9,289                                      |
| Feira de Santana     | 26,140                           | 16                               | 30,322                                     |
| Irará                | 19,920                           | - 2                              | 19,522                                     |
| Itaparica            | 1,379                            | 10                               | 1,517                                      |
| Maragogipe           | 7,513                            | 2                                | 7,663                                      |
| Muritiba             | 8,959                            | 15                               | 10,303                                     |
| Pojuca               | 2,575                            | -31                              | 1,777                                      |
| Salvador             | 7,697                            | 57**                             | 12,075**                                   |
| Santo Amaro          | 25,566                           | -23                              | 19,686                                     |
| Santo Estêvão        | 9,315                            | 20                               | 11,178                                     |
| São Félix            | 4,086                            | 6                                | 4,331                                      |
| São Filipe           | 10,327                           | - 2                              | 10,120                                     |
| São Francisco        | 2,373                            | -22                              | 1,851                                      |
| São Gonçalo          | 8,872                            | - 4                              | 8,517                                      |
| São Sebastião        | 6,395                            | 4                                | 6,651                                      |
| Reconcavo            | 189,967                          |                                  | 196,468                                    |

\*Calculated change in rural population from 1940 to 1950. It has been assumed that the agricultural labor changed at the same rate as the rural population.

\*\*Because of a change in the method of totaling the non-urban population of Salvador, it was not possible to derive the 1940-1950 rural population change in the usual manner. The 1950 figure is the mean of three estimates of increase derived from total population change 1940-1950, rural quadrant change 1940-1950, and per cent of total population in agriculture 1940 projected to 1950. These estimates were, in order, 11,097, 12,517, and 12,700. The rural quadrant is a statistical subdivision of the município which does not necessarily include all the rural areas.

Source: Recenseamento Geral do Brasil: 1940. Censo Demográfico—Bahia, Vol. I, and Anuário Estatístico do Brasil—1953, Ano XIV.

241 and plantations, and to a lesser extent, ranchers and vaqueiros  
464 (cowboys).<sup>21</sup> Silviculture is not an important occupation in the  
Recôncavo.

• 161 The mean density of the agricultural labor force for the  
162 Recôncavo was 15.7 per square kilometer. Since the distribution is  
241 very irregular, this mean density is far from representative of local  
464 situations—only six municípios had densities within 10 per cent of  
634 the mean. Because of the uneven distribution of cultivation, mean  
[128] figures for individual municípios, especially the larger ones, are  
[127] likely to be equally misleading. In the discussion which follows  
the gross distributions derived from census data have been modified  
on the basis of field observation and of inferences drawn from  
related demographic, cartographic, and agricultural information.<sup>22</sup>

161 The density of agricultural workers in the Central Recôncavo  
162 (Map 18) is appreciably higher than in the surrounding areas, except  
241 in the southwest. This central zone has densities in excess of  
464 20 per square kilometer, and within it are four areas with densities  
in excess of 25 per square kilometer. Along the border of the  
Recôncavo, densities usually fall to 10 per square kilometer. How-  
ever, this is not true of the more densely occupied "bridge" zone  
which connects the area of heavy concentration in the Recôncavo,  
south of the Rio Paraguaçu, with the "coffee area" to the southwest  
beyond the Recôncavo. The map of densities (Map 18) and the dot  
map (Map 17) of the agricultural labor force suggest that this popu-  
lation segment is clustered in areas which generally have an eccentric  
location in relation to such centers as Salvador and the Baía de  
Todos os Santos.

Over 20 per cent of the agricultural workers of the Recôncavo  
live along the southern, western, and northern extremes of the region,

161 every section of which is more than 50 kilometers from Salvador, the  
 162 economic center of the Recôncavo, and also more than 50 kilometers from  
 241 the geometric center in Santo Amaro. If a line were drawn from the  
 464 cidade of Alagoinhas southwestward to the cidade of Nazaré, the  
 161 following municípios would fall entirely west of that line: Irará,  
 162 Coração de Maria, Feira de Santana, São Gonçalo, Conceição da Feira,  
 241 and Santo Estêvão—all north of the Rio Paraguaçu—and Muritiba,  
 464 Cruz das Almas, São Félix, São Filipe, and Conceição do Almeida—all  
 634 south of the Rio Paraguaçu. These 11 of the 21 municípios of the  
 Recôncavo are all more than 50 kilometers from Salvador—all are much  
 farther in terms of land transport. In these eleven municípios live  
 125,000 of the 196,000 agricultural workers. In part, this  
 eccentricity with respect to Salvador is a result of the shape of  
 the land surface, with the city located at the end of a peninsula.  
 Only one of these 11 municípios, São Félix, lies on tide water, and  
 that at the extreme upper limit of navigation. The others are so  
 arranged that they cannot make optimum use of the central position  
 of the Bay, with its relatively cheap and direct route into the  
 capital.

161 This eccentrically located belt is arcuate in form. It is the  
 162 demographic representation of the transition zone from forest to  
 241 scrub forest, which is often also the transition from the Coastal  
 464 Plain to the Tabular or Crystalline Uplands. The concentration of  
 [132] agricultural labor in this belt is obviously significant from many  
 [133] points of view: social and political as well as economic.

Clustering is a characteristic pattern of Latin American popula-  
 tion. The Recôncavo is the chief population cluster and the greatest  
 single concentration of agricultural labor force within the state of

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Bahia. The broad cluster of the agricultural labor force is composed of several major zones of concentration and two minor agglomerations.

(1) The Southwestern Concentration: The most important of these concentrations, in terms of total number of agriculturalists, occupies the southwestern corner of the Recôncavo. This concentration is a major segment of the eccentric belt discussed above. It is located [131] in the Crystalline Uplands and the Intermediate Hills, along the drainage divide between the Rio Paraguaçu and the Rio Jaguaripe. This is an area of tobacco and manioc cultivation. There are some 35,000 agriculturalists in this concentration, which spreads over approximately 1,000 square kilometers in six municípios—São Félix, Muritiba, Cruz das Almas, Conceição do Almeida, São Filipe, and Maragogipe. The cidade of Cruz das Almas lies very near its center.

TABLE IX

## AGRICULTURAL WORKERS—SOUTHWESTERN CONCENTRATION

| [634] | Município                             | Distrito             | Agricultural Workers 1950 |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
|       | São Félix                             | São Félix            | 2,568                     |
|       |                                       | Outeiro Redondo      | 1,724                     |
|       | Muritiba                              | Muritiba             | 3,044                     |
|       |                                       | Cabegas              | 1,699                     |
|       | Cruz das Almas                        | Cruz das Almas       | 6,038                     |
|       |                                       | Sapé                 | 1,845                     |
|       |                                       | Baixa do Palmeira    | 1,476                     |
|       | Conceição do Almeida                  | Conceição do Almeida | 3,878                     |
|       |                                       | Comércio             | 2,038                     |
|       | São Filipe                            | São Filipe           | 4,931                     |
|       |                                       | Cararipe             | 2,471                     |
|       | Maragogipe                            | Guapira              | 1,169                     |
|       |                                       | Nage                 | 788                       |
|       |                                       | Coqueiras            | 1,072                     |
|       | Approximately 1,000 square kilometers |                      | 34,741                    |

With about 12 per cent of the Recôncavo's total area, the southwestern concentration includes 18 per cent of its agricultural labor force. In its core there are over forty agriculturalists per [634] square kilometer (the município of São Félix as a whole has 42.05 per square kilometer), and this compact core includes São Félix, northern

- 161 São Filipe, northern Conceição do Almeida, southeastern Cruz das Almas,  
162 and the southeastern tenth of Muritiba.  
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The boundaries of this concentration are similar to the boundaries of labor concentrations in other parts of the western Recôncavo. To the southeast the density of the cluster declines sharply across the Intermediate Hills. There are very few fields and few farmers along the estuary of the Paraguaçu, which lies beyond the hills. Much of [311] this land is in forest. To the west the decline in density is even more abrupt. In the dry caatinga beyond the western limits of Muritiba, Cruz das Almas, and Conceição do Almeida there are only a few scattered ranchers and small-scale farmers.

From the core of the concentration the distribution of agricultural workers continues to be relatively dense toward the north and toward the southwest, and this pattern extends across the "bridge" zone and into the coffee area beyond the Recôncavo. Just beyond the Recôncavo, in the middle of the "bridge," is the city and suburban zone of Santo Antônio de Jesus, which has a minor cluster of agricultural workers. The "bridge" follows the forest and scrub-forest transition.

- (2) The Northern Concentration: Though the northern and central clusters of the agricultural labor force of the Recôncavo are less well defined and individually less important than the southwestern cluster, they are major concentrations. In the northern Recôncavo a series of clusters extending through eastern Feira de Santana, Iará, and Coração de Maria are grouped in a rough "u-shaped" pattern. This concentration is the second major element of the eccentric belt of dense agricultural labor. The verticals of the "u" follow agricultural belts along the valleys of two tributaries of the (eastern) Rio Pojuca. This is a zone of Tabular Upland and caatinga vegetation.

161 Because it does not correspond to census divisions, it is diffi-  
 162 cult to determine the area and population of this "u" zone. Apparently  
 241 it has about 1,150 square kilometers and about 30,000 agricultural  
 464 workers (Table X). Maximum densities within this zone are 30 to 40  
 [131] per square kilometer.

TABLE X

## AGRICULTURAL WORKERS--NORTHERN CONCENTRATION

| Município                             | Distrito         | Agricultural Workers 1950 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Feira de Santana                      | Feira de Santana | 9,840                     |
|                                       | Tiquarucu        | 1,725                     |
| Coração de Maria                      | Coração de Maria | 4,176                     |
|                                       | Itacava          | 4,332                     |
| Irará                                 | Irará            | 4,130                     |
|                                       | Bento Simões     | 1,675                     |
|                                       | Pedrao           | 2,454                     |
|                                       | Ourigangas       | 2,683                     |
| Approximately 1,150 square kilometers |                  | 31,015                    |

The "u-shaped" zone is linked with the southwestern cluster by a belt of moderate population density. This belt, running north to south along the caatinga-forest transition, is followed by the Feira de Santana-Cachoeira railroad.

161 (3) The Central Concentration: The central concentration of  
 162 agricultural labor, in east-central Santo Amaro, western São Sebastião,  
 241 and São Francisco--the sugar cane zone, is not a part of the eccentric  
 464 belt discussed above, but rather lies in the heart of the Recôncavo.  
 [131]

There are about 6,000 agriculturalists in the 300 square kilometers of this area. The maximum density is about 25 per square kilometer.

In distinction to the concentrations discussed above, the central cluster is in the lowlands--the humid Coastal Plain. (see Table XI).

TABLE XI

## AGRICULTURAL WORKERS--CENTRAL CONCENTRATION

| Município                           | Distrito        | Agricultural Workers 1950 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Santo Amaro                         | Rio Fundo       | 1,849                     |
|                                     | Inhatá          | 1,542                     |
|                                     | Mata de Aliança | 920                       |
| São Sebastião                       | Jacuipe         | 1,036                     |
| São Francisco                       | São Francisco   | 804                       |
|                                     | Santa Elisa     | 176                       |
| Approximately 300 square kilometers |                 | 6,327                     |

(4) The Minor Agglomerations: Minor concentrations of agriculturalists surround two urban centers in the Recôncavo: Salvador and Alagoinhas. Most of the 12,000 agricultural workers in the município of Salvador are grouped either in the northeast--close to the central cluster of the sugar cane zone--or around the capital city. The latter either live in the city or in the sub-urban areas around and between the various urban segments. These sub-urban cultivators primarily work to supply the large urban market. Alagoinhas lies in the midst of relatively unproductive taboleiros. The agriculturalists who serve its urban market and produce its chief commercial crop--oranges--are gathered compactly in a symmetrical ring around the city.

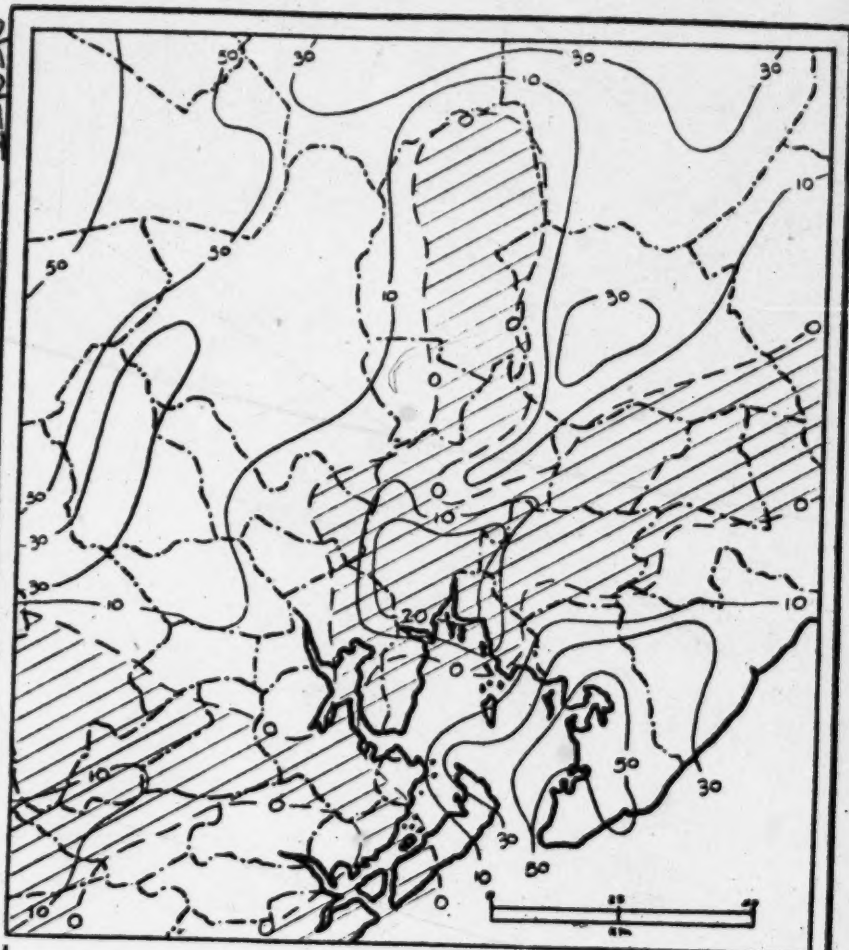
(131) The concentrations discussed above account for some 80,000 (41 per cent) of the agricultural workers and 3,150 square kilometers (25 per cent) of the area of the Recôncavo. In general, a straight line from the southwestern tip of Conceição do Almeida to the southern tip of Serrinha is the western limit of moderately dense distribution of the agricultural labor force. Beyond this line, in the caatinga of Feira de Santana and Castro Alves, there are few agricultural workers. However, in the caatinga of the município of Santo Estêvão and the adjacent part of Feira de Santana there is a zone with a population density of about 15 per square kilometer--higher than anywhere

• 161 else along the western border. This modest concentration, scarcely a  
162 cluster, represents the sum of a number of small agricultural settle-  
241 ments scattered along the humid slopes of low serras. There are about  
464 [361] 12,000 agricultural workers distributed over this area.

161 The distributional pattern of the rest of the Recôncavo can be  
162 visualized as a coarse net in which the clusters are linked by areas  
131 with population densities of 10 to 20 per square kilometer. There is  
241 one large hole in this connecting net: along the common border of  
464 Cachoeira, São Gonçalo, and Santo Amaro there is a zone with less than  
ten and sometimes less than five agricultural workers per square  
kilometer. This zone, very near to the center of the Recôncavo, for  
[133] the most part is an area of rough sandy hills bordering the crystalline--  
here the hills are particularly rugged and the transition zone broad.  
On three sides--southwest, north, and northeast--this sparsely settled  
zone is bordered by important clusters of agriculturalists.

161 The agricultural labor force of the Recôncavo is, as has been  
162 seen, irregularly distributed. This distribution is highly fluid--  
241 movement and growth and decline are continuously altering the pattern.  
464 The whole region gained about 6,500 agriculturalists between 1940 and  
1950, but these statistics do not reflect the extent of local reloca-  
tion.

161 In the central Recôncavo one município, Santo Amaro, lost  
162 almost 6,000 agricultural workers between 1940 and 1950, and in three  
241 municípios of the central and eastern Recôncavo, Santo Amaro,  
464 São Francisco, and Pojuca, losses exceeded 20 per cent. On the other  
634 hand, in three municípios of the uplands of the northern and northwestern  
Recôncavo--Alagoinhas, Feira de Santana, and Santo Estêvão--there were  
gains of over 20 per cent. Over all, twelve municípios gained and nine  
lost agriculturalists; the mean change in the agricultural labor



RECÔNCAVO OF BAHIA

Per cent of Change in the Agricultural Labor Force (Estimated)  
and in the Rural Population from 1940 to 1950

Shaded area shows zone of loss of agricultural labor force.

161 force of the 21 municípios—without regard to direction of change—was  
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241 13 per cent.  
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[63f]

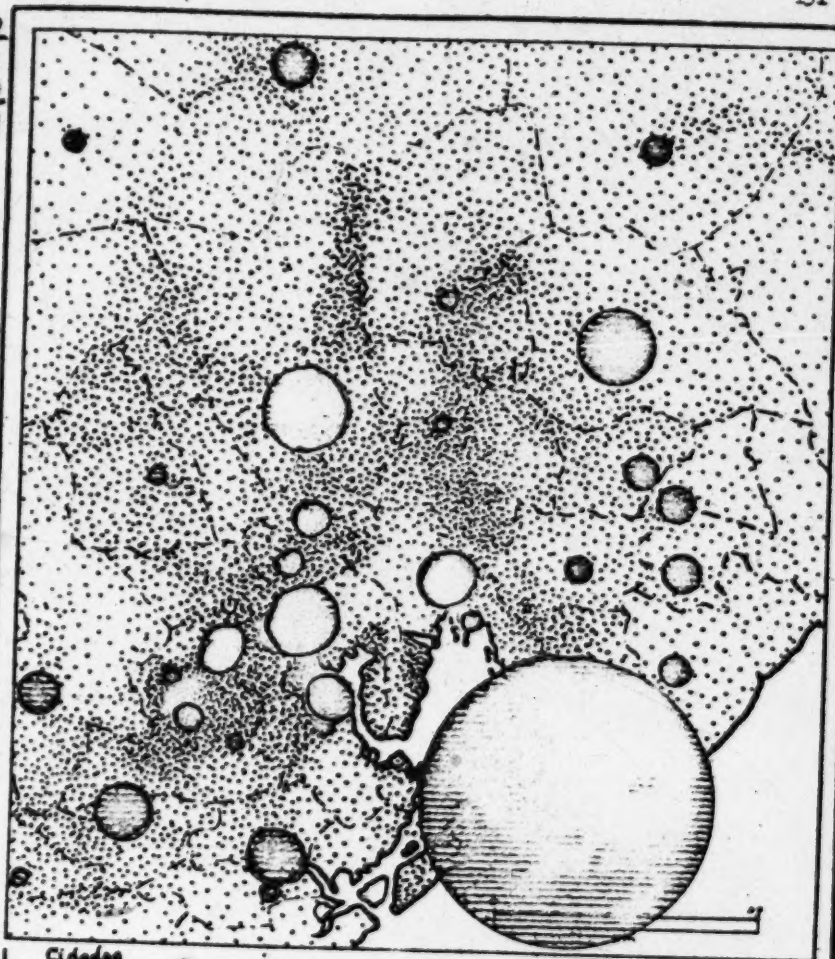
In general the area around Salvador and the northeastern and western margins of the Recôncavo gained in agricultural labor force (Map 19). The Central Recôncavo and areas in the north-central, eastern, and southwestern Recôncavo lost agriculturalists between 1940 and 1950. Some of the factors which produced these changes were local; others were identified with the Northeast or with Brazil as a whole.

The growth of cities in the Recôncavo is a manifestation of a nationwide phenomenon. The expanding urban centers create an increasing market for agricultural products which, because of the difficulty of transportation and the lack of food processing facilities, must be supplied primarily from local sources. These expanding markets attract discontented or displaced agriculturalists, who settle as close to the urban center as possible. There is a marked increase in the concentration of agricultural labor around Salvador, Feira de Santana, and Alagoinhas.

731 In 1950 and 1951 the urban trend and its agricultural con-  
166 comitant was re-enforced by a specific Northeastern phenomenon—the  
[369] flight from the drought (sêca) of the interior. Most of the refugees  
[241] (flagelados) from the dry sertão settled along the periphery of the  
Recôncavo. Here, where they could remain close to their cherished  
sertão, much land was open for squatters. As indicated above, others  
settled around the urban centers of the Recôncavo caatinga zone—  
Feira de Santana and Alagoinhas.

241 Observations suggest that the greatest relative increases in  
464 agricultural labor force from the sertão were in the municípios  
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166 bordering the Recôncavo on the west and north, where the "normal"  
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\*102  
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Cidades

● 1,000

● 5,000

● 25,000

Rural and Village

Each dot = 100 persons

RECÔNCAVO OF BAHIA

Total Population--1950

Source of data: Anuário Estatístico do Brasil-1953,  
402 XLV.

633 tributary area does not extend beyond the state, it does include the coffee and cacao areas, parts of the São Francisco basin, and the sertão of Bahia. It is the focus of transportation and communication, of finance and administration, and of foreign trade for the entire state. Despite the economic, political, and social pre-eminence of Salvador, a few cities operate quasi-independently in a particular function, notably Ilhéus and Itabuna, in the cacao area.

The next largest cities in the Recôncavo--Feira de Santana and Alagoinhas--are much alike in size, location, and function. Feira de [K2] Santana--often called merely Feira--with 26,559 people in 1950, was the second largest city of the Recôncavo and of the state. It is the [543] site of one of the most famous cattle fairs in Brazil.<sup>33</sup> Alagoinhas is smaller--21,289 people in 1950--and less notable historically. It is the third largest city of the Recôncavo and the fifth largest of the state. One of the common functions of both these cities is trans-

633 portation. Feira is the railhead of railroads from Salvador and from 494 Cachoeira and is the junction of the Transnordestina trunk highway 496 which crosses the northeast interior of Brazil, with a highway to Salvador and with the only highway from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro. Alagoinhas is the junction where the railroad (Leste) to Senhor do Bonfim and Juazeiro--on the Rio São Francisco--branches from the main line from Salvador to Yacéio, the capital of the state of Alagoas. Just outside Alagoinhas are the main railroad shops of the Leste line

633 (Viação Férrea Federal Leste Brasileiro). The position of these cities, 369 intermediate between the Recôncavo and the sertão, is reflected in 291 the appearance of the people who are met on their streets--dark 142 Recôncavo agriculturalists in straw hats, patched khaki trousers, and wooden clogs and nestigo vaquéiros (cowboys) from the sertão in 633 their leather hats and vests. Each has a number of postos (garages) 495 161

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● 161 to service the hundreds of trucks and busses which are transforming the transportation of the interior. Both cities reflected their growing function by a great increase in population between 1940 and 1950.

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[162] Cachoeira-São Félix, 16,697 people in 1950,<sup>34</sup> and Santo Amaro, 12,258 people in 1950, are respectively the fourth and fifth largest cities in the Recôncavo and the eighth and tenth largest cities in Bahia. Both of these cities are important agricultural and marketing centers within the Recôncavo, and both are notable historical centers. Santo Amaro was the great local social and economic focus of the slave-holding engenho sugar culture of the Central Recôncavo. Cachoeira was the major local center of the Western Recôncavo and of the tobacco economy throughout colonial times. While these cities maintain some of their former importance, they are mainly cities of the past,

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494 growing at a much slower rate than most urban centers. Both cities lie at or near the head of navigation,<sup>35</sup> and both are on the railroad which runs from Salvador to the western interior. The construc-

tion of the railroad and the development of automotive transport apparently have been important factors in the declining importance of these cities, for it is no longer necessary to trans-ship goods brought down from the interior into boats at these places. The  
633  
[565] railroads and trucks move the goods directly to Salvador.<sup>36</sup> At present these cities function as local trade centers, as minor industrial centers—Cachoeira-São Félix in tobacco; Santo Amaro in sugar—and as the residences of decadent upper class families whose fortunes declined with the disappearance of the slave-holding agricultural systems.

The other urban centers of the Recôncavo:

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633 and, to a lesser extent, the rest of the Recôncavo and the state. The  
464 relatively large and affluent upper class of Salvador utilizes an  
433 extravagantly large number of domestics and of industrial workers--in  
food, clothing, and construction industries.

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178 Conclusion. The preservation of traditional values among the  
181 people of the Recôncavo is evidence of the survival value of their  
433 conservative culture, but the relatively slow growth of the population  
161 is indicative of a declining economic role in the nation. Although  
8 the population of both Brazil and the Recôncavo grew between 1940 and  
BB 1950, Brazil's population increased 26.5 per cent, the Reconcavo's only  
161 16 per cent. In Brazil as a whole, urban populations increased 46 per  
162 cent, in the Recôncavo only 34 per cent. The rural population of  
Brazil increased by 17 per cent; the approximately comparable figure  
for the Recôncavo was 4 per cent.

Within the Recôncavo the net effect of population changes in  
the decade 1940 to 1950 was the reduction in rural population from  
60 per cent to 54 per cent of the total population (see Table XIII).

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161 Even more serious, from the agricultural point of view, was the  
162 decline in the relative number of agricultural workers. Despite the  
241 influx of agricultural people from the sertão, the percentage of the  
464 total population in the agricultural labor force fell from 21 per cent  
(1940) to 18 per cent (1950).

BB  
633 The greatest single concentration of population in the Recôncavo  
[162] is the city of Salvador. One-third of the people of the region live  
in this predominant city, occupying the tip of the peninsula which  
separates the Baía de Todos os Santos from the sea. In this eccentric  
peninsular location, Salvador is relatively distant from the main  
centers of agricultural production and has only circuitous land

TABLE XIII

## COMPOSITION OF RECÔNCAVO POPULATION 1940-1950

| Year                           | Total Population | Urban Centers | Rural Population | Agricultural Labor Force |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1940                           | 924,032          | 368,932       | 555,100          | 189,967                  |
| 1950                           | 1,072,452        | 493,944       | 578,508          | 196,468                  |
| Change                         | + 148,420        | +125,012      | + 23,408         | + 6,501                  |
| 1940                           | 100 o/o          | 40 o/o        | 60 o/o           | 21 o/o                   |
| 1950                           | 100 o/o          | 46 o/o        | 54 o/o           | 18 o/o                   |
| Change                         |                  | + 6 o/o       | - 6 o/o          | - 3 o/o                  |
| Growth of Recôncavo Population |                  |               |                  |                          |
| 1940 to 1950                   | 16 o/o           | 34 o/o        | 4 o/o            | 3 o/o                    |
| Per cent of Total Growth       |                  |               |                  |                          |
| 1940 to 1950                   | 100 o/o          | 84 o/o        | 16 o/o           | 4 o/o                    |

633 connections with the western section of the Recôncavo. On the other hand, its location combines oceanic access with the rest of Brazil, Europe, and the Americas and a direct approach, via the Bay, to all of the central municípios of the Recôncavo.

161 The major concentrations of rural, agricultural population in  
162 the region are in the outer municípios of the Southwestern, Northwestern,  
241 and Northern Recôncavo. In the southwest, there is a notable concentra-  
464 tion on the Crystalline Uplands. In the northern part of the Recôncavo, the concentrations lie along the dissected edges of the Tertiary taboleiros. Thus most of the agricultural people of the region live  
[134] in upland areas of deep, porous soils and marginal rainfall. The  
[132] only major lowland concentration of agricultural people is in the area of Cretaceous clay soils on the Coastal Plain of the Central Recôncavo. The relatively small size of the agricultural population  
[249] in this area is reflective of the declining role of sugar cane culti-  
[178] vation in the Recôncavo.

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[461] "Falta de braços"--lack of labor--is a problem much discussed in the Recôncavo. The landholders, merchants, and agronomists interviewed in the region almost invariably complained of the shortage of agricultural workers or renters. At the same time, the level of per capita productivity of most agricultural labor remains low, and, as will be seen, there have been few attempts at improvement of agricultural techniques. Neither is there any apparent trend toward higher wages or higher returns on rented properties, which might attract more people to the area. The complaints of labor shortages must be viewed in the context of the systems of production and the economic organization of agriculture, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

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Several basic agricultural problems are prefigured in the analysis of the distribution of the population of the Recôncavo. The concentration of agricultural people in the western and northern municípios of the region corresponds, as will be shown, to a major area of agricultural production. Since this is also an area of marginal and irregular precipitation, it is almost inevitable that the level of production must be uneven and the lives of the agriculturalists unstable. The declining agricultural population of the Central Recôncavo is a symptom of the declining importance of the sugar economy, discussed previously, and of the centralization and rationalization currently under way. The alternating zones with high and low densities of population indicate the nuclear and separate character of the areas of agricultural production, detailed in the pattern of crop regions to be discussed in the chapters which follow.

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Manioc is generally cultivated by hand by small cultivators on land near the huts in which they live--[land] called the rândioal, very common in the interior of the state. The immediate preoccupation of the sertanejo [countryman of the interior] after the construction of his house is the planting of manioc to secure cheap food--either sweet manioc or bitter manioc, which is transformed into flour. All the family are employed in this work. The industry of flour production is rudimentary and it uses simple processes.

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The cultivation of manioc in Bahia is to provide flour for the local market, since the state does not export this product. The development of this culture is, therefore, closely related to the distribution of population, the most productive zones which are noted on the map corresponding to regions where the population is most dense. It is perfectly reasonable that the most productive region corresponds to the Recôncavo, where there is concentrated the mass of the population of Bahia and a large number of towns and cities, the most important and populous in the state. . . . it is the region of the most highly developed agriculture in the state; it united a relatively dense rural population with manioc, almost always cultivated on a large scale in the zones of the cultivation of tobacco.<sup>6</sup>

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As is indicated in the foregoing quotation, the distributional pattern of manioc reveals a very close association with the cultivation of tobacco and with certain urban centers. But as might be expected in view of the broad environmental tolerance of manioc, its distribution within the Recôncavo is not directly determined by any particular physical factor. Manioc is grown in all parts of the Recôncavo, excepting only the compact pockets of sugar cane cultivation. Only one município, São Sebastião, grew less than 100 hectares or produced less than 1,000 tons of tubers in 1948. In eight municípios the area of manioc cultivation exceeded 1,000 hectares, and the production was more than 10,000 tons in each. About 28 per cent of the cropland of the Recôncavo was in rândioal.<sup>7</sup>

The major concentration of manioc cultivation (Maps 22 and 23) and production (Maps 24 and 25) is along the eastern edge of the Crystalline Uplands in the Southwestern Recôncavo, where in 1948 three municípios<sup>8</sup> grew 54 per cent of the Recôncavo's 22,472 hectares of

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244 important had less intensive cultivation than the two principal centers  
311 mentioned above.

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311 Most of the remaining crops of the Recôncavo were either minor subsistence crops of general distribution, not of themselves accounting for any strong concentration of cropland, or were major crops produced in small separated centers of intensive cultivation. The Northwestern Recôncavo corn and bean areas, the coconut plantations of the beach line, the Southwestern Recôncavo sugar cane and coffee areas, and the suburban rings of orange production were zones where the mean intensity of cropland was low or, at best, modest.

[137]  
[231] There were two zones of very low intensity of cropland which have not been discussed previously because they did not have significant concentrations of individual crops. The belt of Intermediate Hills around the Central Recôncavo sugar cane area is largely forested, the scene of very scattered cultivation, livestock enterprises, and extractive industries. This belt was used, as will be seen, to provide fuel and to maintain a livestock reserve for the adjoining sugar cane area. The forested belt between the beach line and the inland areas of sugar cane and tobacco cultivation were used primarily for extensive systems of cultivation and for the small scale production of livestock. Only around the perimeter of Salvador was this forested belt intensively used, for in this area there were orange groves, mandioc gardens, and a few very small truck farms.

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[161] Expansion of Cropland. There can be little question but that  
[434] the Recôncavo as a whole was an area of expanding cropland in the 1940's.<sup>31</sup>  
In no other way could the increased food necessary for the growing population be supplied, for there were not then nor are there now external sources for large quantities of staples, excepting only livestock. There

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The physical setting of the tobacco and manioc region is distinctive in terms of the particular combination of topography, soils, climate, and vegetation which are joined along its crescent axis. The region lies along the semi-circular edge of the interior upland, overlooking the Bay and the Coastal Plain. In the south the fields of manioc and tobacco occupy the upper surfaces of the Crystalline Uplands and the adjacent Intermediate Hills. In the north, cultivation shifts to the summits and upper slopes of the Intermediate Hills, although there is some concentration on the extreme southern edge of the taboleiros. Thus the region occupies the deep flat-lying residual crystalline soils in the south but in the Tertiary soil zone to the north follows the slope lands where there is more rainfall and perhaps better local soils. The close correspondence of this region with the forest and scrub-forest transition has been repeatedly emphasized. A traverse across the tobacco-manioc region anywhere between Conceição do Almeida and Feira de Santana takes one from rough hills with at least scattered patches of broadleaf evergreen forest to flat uplands with cactus, thorny brush, and licuri palms.

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A comparison of the map of population (Map 21) and of the relationship of tobacco and manioc cultivation (Map 75) points up the necessity for local sources of basic subsistence products. In the Southwest, where rural populations are relatively dense and where there are a number of large villages and towns, manioc tends to be cultivated over a greater area than does tobacco. In the tobacco-manioc region north of the Rio Paraguaçu, where tobacco is usually the leading crop, the density of rural population is lower, and there are no towns and only a few large villages. Thus there is close relationship between the relative intensity of manioc and the size of the local market.

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The recent historical pattern of agriculture in the tobacco-manioc region can be reconstructed only on a general level. Cachoeira, which

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• 161 of relatively dense rural population, with a large number of villages  
361 and plantation settlements and one city--Santo Amaro. The remaining areas of the sugar cane region have only moderately dense rural populations and no major urban centers, although the cidade of Nazaré is very close to the southern border of São Filipe.

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The tremendous historical significance of the sugar cane region has been discussed at length in the section on the historical setting of the Recôncavo. As far as the sugar cane zone of Santo Amaro, São Francisco, and São Sebastião is concerned, the extent of the region does not appear to have changed very much since colonial times. Old engenhos are found throughout the zone, indicating past cultivation in all areas now in cane. The present usinas cultivate sugar cane intensively clear across the Cretaceous zone, so that it is not likely that the cane area has contracted. However, there are several abandoned engenhos and settlements on the north and east shores of the estuary of the Paraguaçu which seem to indicate that sugar cane cultivation was formerly more extensive around the Baía do Iguaçu.

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The two intensive crop regions of tobacco and manioc and sugar cane, as outlined above, can be viewed as nodal areas which are basic to the regional distinctiveness of the Recôncavo; they are for all practical purposes included totally within its limits; their crop patterns are not duplicated in any nearby area; and they include within their boundaries a very large part--and the most productive part--of its agricultural area.

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311 In distinction to the above intra-Recôncavo regions there are at least three crops which overlap the borders of the Recôncavo, forming crop regions which have their most characteristic development in adjoining areas. The Atlantic coast of Salvador and Itaparica supports

245 The Atlantic coast of Salvador and Itaparica supports  
311 a coconut monoculture--a monoculture which is most strongly developed north of the Recôncavo in Camassari and Mata de São João. The actual area of the coconut monoculture within the Recôncavo is slight, and beyond this monocultural zone, coconut cultivation is rarely significant within the region.

The coconut monoculture lies between the littoral forest and the beach in Itaparica and between the agreste and the beach in Salvador and in the municípios farther north. Except in the município of Salvador, the rural population of the coconut area is not dense. The typical settlement of this zone is the fishing village, sprawled over the beach near the mouth of a small stream. Inland the population is scattered.

243 A much more important crop system intrudes upon the Northwestern  
244 Recôncavo--the corn-bean system. The nuclear area for this system seems  
311 to lie in northern Serrinha and in the municípios bordering upon the state of Sergipe. The area in which over 80 per cent of the cropland was in corn and beans in 1948 overlapped the borders of the Recôncavo into western Feira de Santana and Santo Estêvão--a zone of low serras (Map 76). In this zone the area in corn was from one to two times the area in beans (Map 77).

[134] Most of the soils of this region are either crystalline or Tertiary sands, but the pockets of soil which are actually cultivated are almost invariably heavier and more water retentive than are the sandy upland soils of the taboleiros. The corn-bean region generally [162] has a small but nucleated rural population and a few medium-sized idades which are the only towns of the very large municípios which are characteristic of the area. However, the part of the corn-bean region which [361] overlaps the Recôncavo has a number of villages and hamlets in the valleys of the serras.

APPENDIX C

Sources of Population Increase

161 In the demographic analysis increase in population generally has been discussed without regard to its source. There are two possible sources: (1) immigration; or (2) growth of local population through the excess of births over deaths.

161 Although exact data for immigration into the Recôncavo is lack-  
167 ing, it is probably realistic to disregard sources outside the state of Bahia. The 1950 census gives 144,055 as the number of people in Bahia who were born in other Brazilian states, but shows 430,217 natives of Bahia who were resident in other states. In general, the state of Bahia is the source, not the destination, of a current of migration. The principal origin of this current apparently is the back country of the state, not the Recôncavo. Immigration from other countries is negligible.

It may be inferred that the Recôncavo had a net gain as a result of intra-state migration between 1940 and 1950. The extent to which this gain was permanent is not clear.

163 The birth rate of Bahia has been estimated at 42 or 43 per  
165 thousand, while the death rate of Salvador has been estimated at about  
161 27 per thousand.<sup>1</sup> This suggests that the rate of population increase must be relatively high. On the basis of a population increase of 15 per thousand, the 1940 Recôncavo population of 924,032 would have been 1,060,372 by 1950.

<sup>1</sup>Características Demográficas do Estado da Bahia, pp. 285, 295. Since death records are not available in many parts of the interior, death rates ordinarily are available for the capital cities only.

## Vila Recôncavo

Sugar cane has proved to grow especially well with the combination of warmth, rain, and massapé, and the soil has been producing the same crop for almost four hundred years. The area of massapé is sharply defined, for at its farthest edges the land rises to the regions of sandy scrub forest and desert which characterize what has been called the "other northeast"<sup>2</sup> or the sertão.

The surface of the sugar-Recôncavo is characterized by rolling fields cut by shallow valleys. Although the massapé is not subject to erosion, the other soils, where exposed, are. During the rainy winter season much damage is done, especially to the roads, which for the most part follow the non-massapé soils. Underneath the soil of the sugar-Recôncavo there are recently discovered oil deposits. The quantity of oil has not yet been determined, for the explorations are still going on. However, the national government has already begun to exploit the oil, which is close to the surface. Under Brazilian law, subsoil resources belong to the national government and not to the owner of the lands. As a result there has been a small-scale invasion of petroleum workers on the privately owned lands of the sugar-cane planters. To date, this has not interrupted the agricultural routine to any great extent, at least not in Vila Recôncavo. In Conselho (see map of community), where the drilling was first started, the government bought the land from the individuals and the sugar mill corporation owning it and has turned once green fields of sugar cane into bare fields, spotted here and there with oil wells. The former agriculturalists have had to leave the area or become laborers in the oil camps and refinery.

The Recôncavo is one of the most densely populated regions in Brazil. It is an area of 6,500 square kilometers, with a population of 683,000 in 1940, distributed in 14 counties including the capital. It has an average density of 106 inhabitants per square kilometer,<sup>3</sup> in comparison with the average density of the state of Bahia, which is 7 persons per square kilometer, and with the national average of 5 persons per square kilometer.<sup>4</sup> It must be remembered that these figures include

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 13]

2. Preston James, Latin America (New York, 1942), p. 411.

3. Aroldo de Azevedo, "Recôncavo da Bahia," Revista da Universidade de São Paulo, I (1950), 14.

4. T. Lynn Smith, Brazil (Baton Rouge, 1947), p. 131.

It must be remembered that these figures include the capital city, the population of which is about 450,000. If this is subtracted from the total population of the Recôncavo, the average density of the Recôncavo is approximately 27 persons per square kilometer.

Vila Recôncavo, the community of this study, is part of a county located 41 kilometers across the bay from Salvador. The community includes the town of Vila Recôncavo, which is the county seat, and the surrounding rural zone. Throughout the study we will be dealing with these two components of the sugar-cane plantation community, sometimes separately and sometimes together.

The only public transportation to the town is by boat from the capital, a three-hour trip across the bay, threading through numerous islands. The major part of the trip is made on remarkably blue water, usually serenely calm but occasionally violently agitated, especially during the winter. One-, two-, and three-masted sailing vessels and an occasional large sailing canoe, the centuries-old methods of transportation in Bahia, are passed on their way into the city, carrying fruit, vegetables, pottery, firewood, fish, tobacco, manioc flour, and sugar to the more than four hundred thousand people of the city, as they have done since the early colonization of the Recôncavo. The only new element in the scene is the small diesel boat which makes the trip back and forth across the bay, outward bound one day and returning the next with the outgoing tide.

As the boat nears the luxuriantly green, palm-crested islands, stopping at several to discharge the mail, passengers, and "city goods," one becomes aware of the feeling of stepping back into the past. Barefoot children are selling oranges, peanuts, and fish; and parrots and parakeets, sometimes doped with rum to make them appear tame. The mailman on the dock receives the sack of mail and gives it to his helper to carry to the post office; the island priest may receive a message or package entrusted to the captain of the boat or may even go aboard to travel to the church on another island. The others on the dock call to friends on the boat and exchange news or else simply watch the activity of docking the boat and the casting off. The people of the islands are light-skinned, although well sunburned. Many of them are vacationers from the city, dressed in brightly colored clothes, for the islands are well-known resorts. The others, barefoot, wearing shorts

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# VILA RECÔNCAVO

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county seats, functions which they would still fulfill if they were farther removed from the state capital.

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Finally, and perhaps most important of all, there has been a population shift in the last half century. New centers of population and industry have appeared in the Recôncavo, and there has been a refocusing of commercial activity but no accompanying administrative reform. The old towns, such as Vila Recôncavo, have remained as county seats to carry on administrative duties and the pretense of being the center of municipal activity. Official statistics indicate a great predominance of rural inhabitants in the Recôncavo. Actually, however, much of the population lives in towns. Although these centers are not officially called towns, their pattern of living is urban and not rural. For example, the district of Riachão in the county of Purificação reported in the 1940 census 442 urban and suburban inhabitants, and 9,369 rural inhabitants. This gives no indication of the existence of a large factory town which contains almost nine thousand people.

The older towns may in the long run prove to be more permanent than the newer centers, which for the most part are factory towns, for it is possible that some day in the future the factories may close, causing a complete dislocation. In the meantime towns such as Vila Recôncavo are left out of the new developments, without industry or commerce except what can be done on a small scale, such as fishing or the weekly market. Still known as the formal centers of their counties or districts, they retain their local bureaucratic functions.

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Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the county was the principal community organization, and the town of Vila Recôncavo was the major center of attraction for its county. However, because of developments in the sugar industry, this older community structure began to change. These developments, which will be described in the next chapter, had the effect of further isolating the town of Vila Recôncavo from the main streams of life revolving about the sugar industry, which has always been the major feature of life in the Recôncavo. New developments in the industry caused new community alignments, the end results of which have been to leave the formal administrative centers, such as the town of Vila Recôncavo, out of rural community life to a very great degree. In the next chapter the history of the rural area will be discussed, linking together the town and the rural area.

[Class B Families]

[Class C Families]

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plantation during the author's stay in the community, and her father gave her a large wedding. The wedding party left the plantation early in the morning in an oxcart decorated with white crepe paper, and proceeded to the town of Vila Recôncavo. The wedding was held in the Franciscan chapel. The townspeople did not attend the wedding or show any interest in it. Immediately after the ceremony the wedding party started back to the plantation, a five-mile trip. As each plantation nucleus was passed the cart stopped in front of the overseer's house, and small glasses of rum were passed to the guests, and the happiness of bride and groom was toasted.

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On arrival at the new brick house which the groom's father had presented to the couple, the bride went into the kitchen to help her mother and the other women who were preparing the luncheon. Then she passed small glasses of wine to the guests. With the exception of Dona Sinhá and the author, the guests were all overseers from the neighboring plantations. The female guests were relatives of the bride. The meal consisted of everything the region had to offer: fish, shrimp, salads; roasts of beef, pork, lamb, and turkey; potatoes and farina; followed by fruits, desserts, and coffee. After all the men had eaten and moved into the living room to chat, the bride and the other women sat down in the dining room to eat.

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In a sample of eighteen Class B households (eleven urban and seven rural), fifteen couples were married by both civil and religious ceremonies. The remaining three couples were simply living together, a state known in northern Brazil as amasiado. In Class C a sample of ninety-five households (forty-one urban and fifty-four rural) showed twenty-three couples in the amasiado state, twenty-two married by civil and religious ceremonies, thirty-four married in church only, and eight by civil marriage alone. Eight of the couples sampled did not answer the question. In Class B, one partner in each of the three couples living in the amasiado state was married to someone else whom he or she had left.

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Nineteen civil marriages were performed in the entire county (population over 11,000) during the year of 1950. They are shown below by age group. Fifty religious marriages were performed during the same year throughout the five parishes attended by the Franciscans. Because of differences in the manner of recording the two types of marriages, however, no correlation could be worked out as to how many marriages were both civil and religious. There are no statistics avail-

Vila Recôncavo

but spends most of his time on his plantation. The rest of the municipal officials are, for the most part, people who live in the town, although some of the town councillors are also planters living in the rural area.

The population of the area under study was 4,269 in 1940, and is approximately the same now. Of this number, 1,462 are residents of the town. Of the total of 4,269, only 17 adults (plus their 16 children) in the rural area are considered locally, and appear to be, pure Caucasoid. They are all plantation owners, and all of them also have residences in the city of Salvador as well as in the rural area of Vila Recôncavo. Living in the town are 14 persons (plus their eight children) who are also considered pure Caucasoid. Three of these are foreign-born priests, one is a doctor, one a dentist, one a state tax collector, one a federal tax collector, and two are young men who have married into town families. The others are the wives and sisters of the men in the group, although one of the wives is suspected of having Negro ancestors since she has to have her hair straightened while the others have theirs curled. There are five families and numerous other individuals in Vila Recôncavo who are called 'white', but whose ancestry is known to all as not being entirely Caucasoid, and in the rural area there are even fewer. These people are known as *brancos da terra* (whites of the land), a term similar to the *brancos da Bahia* of which Pierson speaks. [6]

The two other elements which are present in the population of Vila Recôncavo and the surrounding rural area are the Negro and the Indian. As might be expected, the Negroid element in the population overwhelmingly predominates, and there are people who represent mixtures of Negro and Caucasoid ancestry in all possible proportions. The American Indian element appears in the people called locally the *caboclos*, generally from the arid north-eastern *sertão*, who are of mixed Indian and Caucasoid descent. These *caatingueiros* (literally, people from the low brush country of *caatinga*) and *sertanejos* (literally, people from the *sertão*) are not usually permanent residents of the Recôncavo. As a rule, *levas* or groups of these *caboclos* of *caatingueiros* come down into the Recôncavo at harvest time, from September to March, to work during the period when the *sertão* is dry and unproductive. Generally also, only men come, and they remain apart from the permanent plantation workers and at the end of the harvest head for home.

In Vila Recôncavo and its rural area, four social strata can be distinguished. First, there is a small upper class of aristocratic whites. This is almost an endogamous class, and intermarriage between first cousins is extremely frequent. The 17 white adults mentioned above are the members of the five families which locally compose this class. These families have been in the area for generations; two of them have been linked through first-cousin marriages

## INTRODUCTION TO THIS EDITION xxi

ticularly São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro but also Belo Horizonte, Recife, Porto Alegre, and others, including Bahia.<sup>3</sup> For, stimulated by needs which could not be satisfied by importation from Europe or the United States under the conditions existing during two World Wars—and more particularly during the last one—and also by growing internal demand, industrialization has been assuming a continually larger role in what has previously been a predominantly agricultural and pastoral country. Concomitant with this increased industrialization—but not to be confused with it, since, for one thing, it began long before—there also has occurred a rapid and extensive growth of the cities. A high rate of natural increase of the population has meanwhile continued in all parts of the country, so that it is now estimated that approximately two and a half million persons are being added annually to the Brazilian people. New primary, secondary, technological and professional schools have been set up, in an urgent, but not yet adequate attempt—since it began with a huge deficit—to keep up with expanding educational needs.

The emergence of new employment opportunities, espe-

<sup>3</sup> Since the matter may have puzzled some readers, it perhaps should be pointed out that, in keeping with the traditional patterns in such cases during colonization and later, the term "Bahia" was long used to indicate, on the one hand, the Capitania, Province or State of Bahia and, on the other, its capital city, even though the latter had another (and less used) name—Salvador. At the time of our research, the capital city of the State of Bahia—where most of our research was carried on—was widely and commonly known also as "Bahia"; and this name is still being employed. Since this name was used in the original study, it will be retained in this Introduction, in order to avoid possible confusion when consulting different parts of this edition. Incidentally, the spelling of "Bahia" is correctly given here and throughout this book, although, for a time during the "spelling reform" in Brazil (but only temporarily), an effort was made in some quarters to write the name differently.

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THE SEAPORT OF BAHIA

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Outside the city of Bahia and skirting the rim of All Saints Bay lies the Reconcavo,<sup>7</sup> some sixty miles long and varying from a few to thirty miles wide. Its soil is a cretaceous marl of great thickness, similar to the black gumbo of southern Arkansas and northern Texas, known locally as *massapé* or, in literal translation, "that which sticks to the feet." It is quite fertile and well watered and today appears only slightly impaired after nearly four centuries of cultivation. This is the cane and tobacco area upon which formerly both Bahia's commercial greatness and her need for reliable agricultural (hence slave) labor was based.

The Reconcavo was formerly a center of large landholdings, of a rural aristocracy, of a patriarchal system, and of slavery. Today, cane and tobacco are still cultivated, although the former, and to some extent the latter, languish by reason of the condition of the world-market and the persistence of primitive techniques of production. Although large landholdings are still common, the rural aristocracy is decadent, its prestige having suffered a gradual but persistent decline throughout the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries with the loss of the sugar monopoly, the growth of the coastal towns, and the accompanying increase in prestige of the urban professional classes. The abolition of slavery in the late nineteenth century was the final blow, and absentee ownership is now the predominating pattern. However, the present population is more dense in the Reconcavo than elsewhere in the state outside the city of Bahia and remains to this day markedly negroid in character.

<sup>7</sup> The literal meanings of the Portuguese word *reconcavo* are (1) a bay of semicircular shape and (2) the environs of a city. These two meanings appear to have fused in the Bahian use of the term.

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[SALVADOR]

\* 563 /21 cont./

565 the Bahians congregate together or avoid one another much more  
829 in terms of their social rank than of their color or their race.

[656] Crossbreeding is not forbidden by any law and comes up against  
[626] the disapprobation of opinion only to the extent that it affects the  
structure of classes firmly established in the country: upper  
strata made up almost exclusively of Whites, that is to say, per-  
sons of white phenotype or at least "socially white," lower strata  
made up chiefly of colored people; a classification which makes  
classes and racial types approximately coincide, without, how-  
ever, making them identical.

175 From the early days of Portuguese colonization there has been  
\* 563 a large number of colored persons in Bahia. In the beginning the  
[595] colonists mixed largely with the tupi /Tupi/ Indian women of  
the region, living with them in a state of concubinage and often  
[567] polygamy. Slavery having been abolished in the first half of the  
[641] seventeenth century for the aborigines, and civil and political  
rights having been granted them a short time afterward, cross-  
[829] breeding continued through marriage. Thus, today a large num-  
ber of morenos explain their dark color by boasting about some  
ancestor pegado a dente de cachorro, that is to say, captured  
like an animal that one hunts in the virgin forest in the wild state.

• [161] But the number of natives decreased rapidly and had little influ-  
[167] ence on the formation of the Bahian type. The opposite /22/  
[567] occurred with the Africans brought by the thousands and thousands  
to work on the sugar-cane plantations. The crossbreeding of  
Portuguese and Brazilians with Africans and Blacks born in Brazil  
was made possible and even favored by different factors, among  
them the scarcity of white women in the initial period, the slave  
system, the laxness of social control with regard to male sexual  
behavior, the physical and psychological charms of black women,  
in particular the minas Blacks, natives of the Costa da Mina in  
[829] the western Sudan. It was commonly said at that time that, in  
order to see beautiful Negresses, it was necessary to go to Bahia (1):

1. F. Biard, Deux années au Brésil /Two years  
in Brazil/, Paris, 1862.

[SALVADOR]

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[829] a European traveler describes them as gigantic women with the opulent figures of ancient goddesses carved in blocks of black marble, who attracted attention by their "wealth of incomparable vigor" (2).

2. A. d'Assier, op. cit., p. 196.

[829] These were the women whom the Whites preferred as concubines. Certain types of mulattresses and of morenas, especially when they combined the traits of the two races from which they sprang, were also very much sought after by the Whites.

\*563 None of the other Brazilian States that have a large number of Blacks presents as high a percentage of crossbreeding as Bahia. This proves that this State has been the most important Afro-European ethnic melting-pot of Brazil. In truth, it is in our city  
[567] and in its environs, an ancient center of concentration of slaves, that the crossing has taken place with the greatest intensity. The  
\*563  
162 ratio between the number of Blacks and of métis, according to the 1940 census, is 1 to 2.55 in Bahia, whereas in States such as Minas Gerais, which has relatively the same number of Blacks, it is only 1 to 1; in other States, such as Maranhão and Piauí, which have, respectively, 27 o/o and 32 o/o Blacks, this ratio

[829] is 1 to 0.93 and 0.71. This results from the fact that in Bahia the factors of segregation and of discrimination that lie heavily on the darkest of its inhabitants are much less than in the other States. The proportion of pure Blacks began to decrease from the second half of the last century, slave traffic having been forbidden, and especially from 1888, the date of the definitive abolition of slavery, when numerous ex-slaves emigrated to the more prosperous regions of southern Brazil. At present, unfavorable social and economic factors influence the conditions of life, the birth and mortality rates of this group, and explain its progressive diminution (3).

[113]

3. Thales de Azevedo, Civilização e mestiçagem /Civilization and Crossbreeding/, Livr. Progresso Edit., Bahia, 1951, p. 63.

[SALVADOR]

/24 cont. /

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| Year               | Percentage of ethnic types |          |        |
|--------------------|----------------------------|----------|--------|
|                    | Whites                     | "Pardos" | Blacks |
| 1897 . . . . .     | 32.61                      | 29.      | 38.39  |
| 1907 . . . . .     | 32.71                      | 34.74    | 32.55  |
| 1917 . . . . .     | 32.81                      | 39.55    | 27.64  |
| 1927 . . . . .     | 32.91                      | 43.61    | 23.48  |
| 1938 . . . . .     | 33.02                      | 47.37    | 19.61  |
| 1940 (1) . . . . . | 28.74                      | 51.11    | 20.13  |

[114]

1. Figures of the national census, which differ from those relating to mortality because of a difference of evaluation in the classification of the types.

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The rapid growth of the white group, through the incorporation of "whitened" métis, and thanks to the better social and economic conditions of the upper strata of the population, to which the vast majority of the descendants of Europeans belong, means that in the total figure, in relation to the Whites the proportion of colored persons is decreasing at the same time that the proportion of métis is increasing, which is clearly shown by the census:

| Year           | Proportions in relation to one White |          |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
|                | Colored persons                      | "Pardos" |
| 1872 . . . . . | 3.16                                 | 1.88     |
| 1890 . . . . . | 2.84                                 | 2.70     |
| 1940 . . . . . | 2.57                                 | 2.55     |

\*563

The intensity of crossbreeding is actually so great that, as a well-known intellectual of Bahia notes, "the autochthonous fino White is no more than a historic memory" (3).

[113]

3. Prado Valadares, Remirando o caos /Again Considering the Chaos/, Bahia, 1933.